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FM AMCONSUL LAGOS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8529
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA PRIORITY 8358
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW PRIORITY 0156
RUEHCD/AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ PRIORITY 0136
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 0139
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO PRIORITY 0153
RULSDMK/DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAHL/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH AFB UK PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 000124

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W, INR/AA, DS/IP/AF, DS/ICI/PII, DS/DSS/OSAC
WARSAW FOR LISA PIASCIK
CIUDAD JUAREZ FOR DONNA BLAIR
ISTANBUL FOR TASHAWNA SMITH
SAO PAULO FOR ANDREW WITHERSPOON
DOE FOR GPERSON, CGAY
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS, SRENENDER, DFIELDS
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS
STATE PASS USTR FOR ASST USTR FLISER
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD
STATE PASS OPIC FOR ZHAN AND MSTUCKART
STATE PASS TDA FOR NCABOT
STATE PASS EXIM FOR JRICHTER
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/15/2017

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [EPET](#) [KDEM](#) [NI](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: SITREP 16: SSS OPENS NEW LINE OF COMMUNICATION

REF: LAGOS 116

Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

1. (C) Pivot-GIS employees American Bill Graham and Nigerian Ezekiel Akwa remain hostages. John Walker of Control Risks Group told the February 15 Pivot-GIS Hostage Crisis Group he met the Director of Rivers State Security Service (SSS), Alhaji Kola Adeshina, on February 14. Adeshina informed Walker that he opened another line of communication with a local Ijaw elder who was once involved in hostage-taking. The elder is respected by militant leader Prince Igodu, who is purportedly behind this kidnapping. Adeshina said this elder will meet Prince Igodu in hopes of persuading him to release the hostages quickly and only for the modest payment that will probably be termed a facilitator fee or cost. According to Walker, the elder assured SSS the hostages are fine; Walker passed SSS proof of life questions on February 14 to confirm this.

2. (C) Walker said Phillipa Graham is calm and has backed off her threat to approach the media--for now. On February 14, she confided to Walker that following her husband's abduction she had contacted Golden, a youth leader in the Minikpiti village where Pivot-GIS is located. Golden purportedly confirmed Prince Igodu had engineered the kidnapping. Golden said he could secure the hostages' release for naira 2 million (approximately USD 15,625). Mrs. Graham did not accept this offer. Walker told the Hostage

Crisis Group he heard Golden previously had a falling out with Bill Graham regarding a naira 2.5 million demand he presented Graham allegedly on behalf of the community. Graham refused to pay the sum.

13. (C) Comment: It appears the SSS has stepped up its efforts to secure Graham's release. Using the local elder as an alternate line of communication is an example of this effort. It will take a few days to determine if this new avenue will bear fruit. End Comment.
BROWNE